

**Security Council**

Distr.: General
25 September 2014

Original: English

**Letter dated 25 September 2014 from the Secretary-General
addressed to the President of the Security Council**

Pursuant to Security Council resolutions 1575 (2004), 1639 (2005), 1722 (2006), 1785 (2007), 1845 (2008), 1895 (2009), 1948 (2010), 2019 (2011), 2074 (2012) and 2123 (2013), I have the honour to convey the attached letter dated 11 September 2014, which I received from H.E. Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, transmitting the thirty-eighth report on the activities of the European Union military mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (see annex). The report covers the period from 1 March to 31 May 2014.

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) BAN Ki-moon

14-61677 (E) 290914



Please recycle



Annex

**Letter dated 11 September 2014 from the High Representative
of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
addressed to the Secretary-General**

In accordance with Security Council resolutions 1575 (2004), 1639 (2005), 1722 (2006), 1785 (2007), 1845 (2008), 1895 (2009), 1948 (2010), 2019 (2011), 2074 (2012) and 2123 (2013), please find enclosed the thirty-eighth three-monthly report on Operation Althea to the Security Council.

(Signed) Catherine Ashton

Enclosure**Report of the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on the activities of the European Union military mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina****I. Introduction**

1. The present report covers the period from 1 March to 31 May 2014.
2. In its resolutions 1575 (2004), 1639 (2005), 1722 (2006), 1785 (2007), 1845 (2008), 1895 (2009), 1948 (2010), 2019 (2011), 2074 (2012) and 2123 (2013), the Security Council requested that Member States, acting through or in cooperation with the European Union, report to the Council on the activities of the European Union military mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR) at least at three-monthly intervals. This is the thirty-eighth such report.

II. Political background

3. The reporting period was marked by extensive floods in mid-May 2014, which caused one of the largest natural disasters on record in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the region. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, close to 1 million people were affected. The Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina participated in a strong effort undertaken by the civilian authorities in response to the humanitarian crisis. EUFOR/Operation Althea supported the country's authorities in filling a critical gap during the lifesaving phase. The European Union and its member States, as well as other international partners such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, are in the lead in terms of providing assistance during the recovery. The disastrous floods exacerbated the country's socioeconomic challenges, while also revealing encouraging signs of solidarity among the population.

4. General elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina will be held on 12 October 2014. Ethnocentric politics and narrow party interests continued to dominate the political agenda. Election-related political calculations increased the use of inflammatory and divisive political rhetoric.

5. In April 2014, following the visit of Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, to Bosnia and Herzegovina on 11 March, the Council of the European Union adopted conclusions supporting broad European Union engagement with the country and urging the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to respond to the needs of citizens. In addition, the Council endorsed initiatives to improve economic governance, strengthen competitiveness, stimulate economic growth, address rule-of-law issues and accelerate the implementation of European Union-funded projects.

6. On 26 and 27 May 2014, in order to tackle the socioeconomic needs of Bosnia and Herzegovina that had sparked the February riots, the European Union, together with international partners and participating international financial institutions, organized a "forum on jobs and prosperity". The forum allowed for an in-depth discussion about necessary socioeconomic reforms and launched the process for

formulating the "Compact for Growth", a package of key economic reforms for the country. It is of great importance that the leaders and institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina support and vigorously implement the outlined agenda.

7. The comprehensive approach promoted by increased cooperation between the European Union Special Representative and Operation Althea has proved, once more during the humanitarian crisis, its added value in terms of both increased effectiveness of European Union reaction and demonstrated commitment to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

III. Security situation and activities of the European Union military mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina

8. The overall security situation remained calm and stable during the reporting period. Owing to the flooding, the socioeconomic situation deteriorated significantly, and the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina must address this.

9. Since the February riots, efforts to improve coordination with law enforcement agencies have continued; indeed, the authorities have identified and openly admitted the need to improve communication, cooperation and coordination among all police bodies.

10. Operation Althea continued its main effort in the area of capacity-building and training, while retaining the means to support the authorities' efforts to maintain a safe and secure environment as "second responder".

11. The four home-based companies required as intermediate reserves were available throughout the period. As from 1 May 2014, Slovakia also contributed an intermediate reserve company. Therefore, EUFOR now has five intermediate reserve companies available until the end of 2014, during the election period.

12. The over-the-horizon reserve force, comprising one Italian infantry battalion, reduced its readiness from 14 to 7 days mission ready in theatre until the end of the year to cover the elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina. No strategic reserve force has been identified.

13. During the floods in Bosnia and Herzegovina, EUFOR has provided substantial assistance to the country's authorities by conducting more than 300 air evacuation flights in order to rescue more than 1,000 persons in immediate danger caused by floods, and by delivering tons of essential supplies. There have also been more than 30 EUFOR truck convoys delivering, inter alia, water, food, blankets, clothes, shelter and generators to assist people in flooded areas.

14. Floods and landslides have displaced mines as well as warning signs, which will pose an increasing risk both to assistance personnel and to the local population. EUFOR and the Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Centre are currently working to identify areas of displaced mines.

IV. Outlook

15. Work is ongoing to assess how much the safety conditions at the weapons and ammunitions storage sites may have been affected by the flooding and to re-map the now potentially mine-contaminated areas that had previously been cleared.

16. The overall security situation has remained calm and stable. Concerns exist that the socioeconomic environment remains a serious problem, in particular the possible perception that disaster relief actions are not reaching the affected population equally. This may have the potential to lead to situations that could threaten the safe and secure environment.

17. Given the election-related increased use of inflammatory and divisive political rhetoric, as seen in previous election periods, a close link between EUFOR and the law enforcement agencies of Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly around the time of the election and during the government formation period, will be crucial to ensure adequate situational awareness and responsiveness.
